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INSIDE...

NIGHTTIME AT MAGIC MOUNTAIN

Six Flags Magic Mountain is mixing neon with sound while putting more emphasis on nighttime attendance for its 1987 season. An Intamin Looping Starship and a \$1 million dance club, "After Hours," highlight the \$4 million improvement package. See story on Page 21.

ROCKETS ARE FLYING IN HOUSTON

Creative ticketing and a winning season have combined to bring financial success to the Houston Rockets of the National Basketball Assn. Ticket sales account for 55 percent of the \$17 million budget. General manager says "the operation is now at 85-95 percent efficiency." See story on Page 15.

FEYLINE FORCED TO LIQUIDATE

The U.S. Bankruptcy Court declared Feyline Presents financially insolvent and ordered the company to liquidate. Barry Fey, with new partner Michael Cohl, plans to buy back some of Feyline's assets, including the Feyline trademark. See story on Page 5.

STRAIT SETS RECORD

Country superstar George Strait packed the Astrodome with 49,246 on the opening night of the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, an all-time record attendance for the event. After 11 days of the 16-day event, attendance was 625,609, down 14,000 from last year. Reason: rain all week. See story on Page 41.

NEW PALM BEACH PAVILION

Work has begun on a \$12 million, 15,000-seat amphitheater in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. The 90-acre venue is due to open by summertime, 1988. Its Boston developer also built the Great Woods Performing Arts Center in Massachusetts. See story on Page 9.

HOME OF THE RUNNIN' REBELS

The University of Nevada at Las Vegas basketball team, a perennial national power, and the successful National Finals Rodeo competition, were the main draws as 803,000 fans attended 139 events at the school's Thomas & Mack Center in 1986. The building has \$2 million in capital improvements planned, but is waiting for the state to chip in. See story on Page 9.



DIAMOND SHINES AT SUN DOME — Following three consecutive sellouts in Tampa at the University of South Florida's Sun Dome, Neil Diamond received a plaque of appreciation. From left are Charlie Thomas, associate director of the facility; Joe Lambusta, president, Magic Productions; Mike LaPan, the building director; Diamond; Nelson Castellano, president, American Concerts; and Sal Bonafede, Diamond's manager.

AT SILVERDOME MARCH 29...

McMahon Eyes Wrestlemania Mark

By MELINDA NEWMAN

"The ultimate Wrestlemania will take place on Pluto, Venus and Mars," laughed Vince McMahon, president of Titan Sports, the promoter for World Wrestling Federation's Wrestlemania III.

For now, McMahon has more to accomplish on this planet, including setting the world's record for largest indoor event, a feat he expects to accomplish with Wrestlemania III.

It will take place at the Pontiac (Mich.) Silverdome, March 29, and McMahon is confident it will break the current indoor record held by the Rolling Stones when the group attracted 87,500 to the Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans, in 1981.

As of the last week in February, more than 50,000 tickets had been sold. Tickets are priced at \$30, \$20, \$15, and \$9, with a

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Six Flags Atlantis Waterpark Adding \$2 Mil Ride Package

By PATRICIA BATES

Six Flags Atlantis will become a wet and dry park this spring when \$2 million in mechanical rides are installed alongside the water slides and pools.

Four spectaculars and three kiddies are being imported for the Hollywood, Fla., attraction. For the adults, the pieces are a Himalaya, from Angouleme in France; a Matterhorn, from Heinrich Mack GmbH & Co., Waldkirch, West Germany;

and an Enterprise and a Pirate Ship from Huss US Service, Switzerland, through its Corfu, N.Y., branch. For the children's area, a Red Baron, Pony Rodeo and Swing Ride have been obtained from Zamperla, through its U.S. offices in Parsippany, N.J., and factory in Vicenza, Italy.

The park will not have a "midway;" most of the equipment will be set up in clearances and passageways between

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Final 4 Would Mean Big Payoff For UNLV

By LINDA DECKARD

LAS VEGAS — Including first-round playoffs, the Runnin' Rebels basketball team could generate \$3.2 million of the \$5.5 million spent by the athletic department of the University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV).

It's a good feeling for Brad Rothermel, athletic director, who is aware "two-thirds to three-fourths of (the nation's) university athletic departments are in financial disarray."

"Our hope is that with the Final Four (NCAA national championships), we could be near a \$1 million surplus this year. It could be nice to endow it and have in on reserve."

UNLV was 29-1 with one game to go when Rothermel was interviewed Feb. 27.

He considers winning an educational and fiscal goal in all 14 sports, and he's talking national championships for a school that has yet to win one. It's the only way to stay healthy when hampered by youth and geography.

"We're not yet 30 years old," he notes of UNLV. "We have 13,000-15,000 total living alumni, half of whom live here. The University of Illinois has one million, probably one-third to one-half in the state."

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ENJOYING THE WIN — Bob Maxson, left, president of the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, and Dennis Finfrock, manager of Thomas & Mack Center, smile about the Runnin' Rebels basketball team's winning season. See story on Page 9. (AB Photo)

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McMahon Eyes Wrestlemania Mark...

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Golden Circle of 2,500 seats sold for \$100. Through seating in the Silverdome, closed-circuit viewing and pay-per-view capabilities, Wrestlemania's potential audience exceeds 1.5 million.

The Silverdome will be manifested for 88,000 seats in the main stadium, with closed-circuit viewing for a few thousand more in other areas of the building.

"We'll do better than the 87,500 record," McMahon said. "The Michigan marketplace is excellent for us. The people at the Silverdome are extremely cooperative and want to do everything to insure the event's success. I wish it were that way everywhere we went."

MECCA Income Up 10% In '86

Robert O. Ertl, president of the Milwaukee (Wis.) Exposition & Convention Center & Arena (MECCA), reported a 10 percent increase in income for the three-building complex in 1986.

Total income for the year was \$3,825,686, compared with \$3,473,164 in 1985. Other year-end figures released by MECCA were:

- Attendance for 1986 increased eight percent to 2,142,451 from 1985's 1,975,564.

- Convention delegate spending increased to \$71,500,736, compared with \$51,759,777 in 1985.

- Booth and equipment income increased 11 percent, or \$64,212.

- Space rentals were up 10 percent, or \$149,049.

- Concessions revenue was up \$139,261, or 11 percent.

"Hell yes, we're excited about this," said Silverdome Director Mike Abington. "This could potentially be the biggest one-time wrestling event in sports and could also exceed our one-night record when we had 82,500 here for the Super Bowl in 1982."

WWF is also enlisting the aid of concert promoter Cellar Door to help coordinate local activities. "They're operating by our request," said WWF Media Coordinator Mike Weber. "They're purchasing spots on radio, television and cable as well as serving as our local contact. They're not acting as a promoter. We're paying them a flat fee and they're acting strictly under our direction."

Marketing the event is well underway through the 200-station network that telecasts WWF matches. Wrestlers are showing up on *Entertainment Tonight*, *The Late Show Starring Joan Rivers* and *The Tonight Show*.

"With our syndicated network, we're tailor-marketing the spots," McMahon said. "For example, Des Moines will receive the basic matches with segments added on shown only in Des Moines, letting them know that there's a closed-circuit location or that pay-per-view is available in their area."

THE HULKSTER

Wrestlemania III is expected to last three hours, McMahon said, with the title bout featuring Hulk Hogan defending his WWF heavyweight belt against Andre the Giant.

Among the other 11 matches are Rowdy Roddy Piper's farewell match against Adorable Adrian Adonis. Piper is leaving the ring to go Hollywood. Jake the Snake will have Alice Cooper in his corner when he takes on the Honky Tonk Man.

Celebrities on hand will include hometown girl Aretha Franklin, who will sing "America The Beautiful;" *Entertainment Tonight's*



OUTTA MY TERRITORY — These three arena officials registered for the District V conference of the International Assn. of Auditorium Managers in Tampa, though it's out of their region. Harold Bannon, left, business manager for the Hartford (Conn.) Civic Center, and Joe D'Angelo, manager of Broome County Arena, Binghamton, N.Y., also helped Beth Wade, Wings Stadium, Kalamazoo, Mich., celebrate her birthday during the meet. (AB Photo)

Mary Hart, who will serve as guest timekeeper, and Bob Uecker, the guest ring announcer.

In addition to the 90,000 seats at the Silverdome, there will be another 860,000 seats available through closed-circuit viewing. Although last year's Wrestlemania II grossed more money than Wrestlemania I, there were plenty of empty seats in some closed-circuit locations.

"We've decided not to use some marginal venues from last year again," McMahon said. "This year we've gone from 230 satellite outlets to 160, but we've beefed up our pay-per-view capabilities. In many ways, this event is big enough to offer pay-per-view and closed-circuit in some cities; where it's not, we've chosen one or the other. Where we've cut a satellite location, there's pay-per-view opportunities."

Video Star, which handled Wrestlemania II last year, will again supply the feed, and screens when necessary, to the outlets. Top ticket for satellite locations is \$15,

with most in the \$9 to \$13 range, Weber said.

Wrestlemania III stands to break another record, for pay-per-view participation, held by Wrestlemania II. Last year's event drew 400,000 households out of a four million capability.

"This year we've gone to six million household capability," McMahon said. "I think we'll have about 12 percent, a viewing increase that will bring us substantially over last year's record."

As was the case with Wrestlemania II, Wrestlemania III will be shown abroad as well. Twenty-five countries will receive the feed, up five from last year.

San Antonio's...

Continued from Page 11
Arena. The private rooms will be leased to companies on an annual basis. The Spurs control the concessions rights at the coliseum, but contribute about 15 percent of food, drink and merchandise sales to the venue. Cocktail parties, receptions and banquets are handled by Catering by Rosemary, San Antonio.

Besides sporting events, Hemisfair Arena does between 30 and 35 concerts annually. There may be a substantial reduction in the number of shows in 1987, to some 20-25 concerts, said Madison.

Hemisfair Arena is in the same secondary market as Frank Erwin Center, on the University of Texas at Austin campus. "Some artists will go to both facilities, but most have to make a decision between us," said Madison. Because there are so many college students in Austin, it has the radio airplay and record sales for acts.

San Antonio also has an obscenity ordinance, which has been in effect for one year, and must be enforced by the promoter of rock shows. The ordinance, believed to be the only one of its type in the U.S., prohibits youngsters age 13 and under from attending events where they might be exposed to sexually explicit language or material.

"The law is written in such wording that a band would have to do 'Deep Throat' onstage for it to be in violation," said Jack Orbin, president of Stone City Attractions. As the main producer in San Antonio, Orbin has not yet barred anyone, regardless of age, from the door during a concert date.

In 1986, no act really boycotted the building here because of the ban.

Lowell Auditorium Now Managed By ACM Nicholson

By PATRICIA BATES

Lowell Auditorium, Boston, which received a new lease on life in 1986 with a \$6 million restoration, began a five-year operating agreement with ACM Nicholson Management Co. this January.

The corporation was awarded the contract through 1992, after the coliseum had completed its first calendar year after a two-year reconstruction.

The Boston firm, which is also booking the building beginning with Paul Anka on Feb. 28, is presided over by facility consultant Jack Nicholson, former manager of the Boston Garden and the Cumberland County Civic Center, Portland, Maine. He has been an advisor at the arena since September 1984.

Lowell Auditorium has a 3,000-capacity main hall, which has hosted Wayne Newton, Barbara Mandrell, Tom Jones and comedian Jay Leno as headliners since last September. Along with that "Fabulous Fall" schedule, Dionne Warwick, Billy Crystal and Robin Williams went SRO at shows earlier last year.

The complex also has a three-level conference center, and the Merrimack Repertory Theater is headquartered in a 450-seat room there.

On the upcoming schedule for Lowell Auditorium are concerts by comedian Howie Mandel, March 11; magician Doug Henning, 19; Roy Orbison, 28; the Flying Karamazov Brothers, April 1; Joan Rivers, 4; Jeffrey Osborne, 7; the Atlanta Symphony, 24; Andy Williams, 29; and jazz musician Dave Brubeck, May 1.

Closed-circuit TV bookings include Wrestlemania III, March 29, and the Marvelous Marvin Hagler-Sugar Ray Leonard middleweight boxing title bout, April 6.

ACM Nicholson Management Co. has also undertaken a study of the Poli theaters for the city of Bridgeport, Conn. Nicholson is partnered on the project with Frank E. Russo, president of Monitor Productions, Hartford, Conn.

Nicholson's firm is also to evaluate the need for expansion in the athletic department at Temple University, Philadelphia, including a possible sports arena, with assistance from Arthur D. Little Co., Cambridge, Mass., and Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum, Kansas City.

A partial client list in the past three years since ACM Nicholson was instituted has been Wrestlemania, Ticketron, New Haven (Conn.) Coliseum, Providence (R.I.) Civic Center, Cape Cod Coliseum, Harlem Globetrotters, the City of Worcester, and CCTV boxing producers New England Presentations.

The firm's areas of representation include facility management; surveys; promotion, publicity, marketing and advertising (in association with Agnew, Carter, McCarthy, Boston, or Event Services and Promotions, New York City and Boston); and executive searches, through staff recruiters Garofolo, Curtiss, and Co.



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